

Alfred Thomas DEW

Born Rewe, Nr Exeter 3 November 1891
Stoker 1st class, Royal Navy, Service No: K 22746

Died 31 May 1916, aged 24
H.M.S.INDEFATIGABLE

Alfred Thomas Dew was one of five children of the marriage of **John Dew** and Louisa Harriet Hodge. (CWGC site info)

John Dew's father was Joseph John Dew (1836-1903) and Joseph appears with his mother, Margaret, in Rosemary Lane, St Edmund, Exeter in 1851. His mother was a laundress born in Clyst St Mary, ca 1791.

After this point the name Joseph is dropped and John married Ann Babel (1838-1890) in St Thomas district (Exwick?) in Q3,1860. He appears as John in 1861 census when he is working as an engineer in paper mills. They had their first son John Dew, 8 months old (born St Thomas, Q4,1860) in time for that census.

Joseph John Dew and Ann carried on to have a large family, **John (1860-1909)**, George (1862-1936), Bessie (1864-1942), Samuel (1866-1941), Henry James (1868-1927), Charles (1870-1871), Walter, (1872-1914), Alice (1875-1907), Charles William (1878-1907) and Albert (1879-1911).

John, aged 35, is shown as a paper maker in 1871 but a Labourer in 1881 when the family were still living in Exwick.

Ann died in 1890 and Joseph John Dew was a widower in 1891 and working as a mason's labourer with Bessie, Walter, Charles William and Albert living at home at Wilsons Cottages, Exwick Hill. In the next property his son, Samuel Dew, was living with his wife Harriet (1866-).

By 1901 Joseph John was 63, but still a general labourer and Bessie (36) was with him working as a laundress, with Alice (26) and Fred, described as a son aged 7. Joseph John Dew died in 1903.

Their first child, John Dew (1860-1909) married Louisa Harriet Hodge on 17 August 1879 in the Parish Church of St Thomas, Exeter. She was born in Exeter St Thomas, in the 4th quarter of 1859, the daughter of Thomas Hodge (1831-) and Sarah Ann Hodge (1834-). Sarah Hodge became a widow by the age of 35 (census 1871) and living as a laundress at 1 Haven Banks, Exeter St Thomas, with Louisa Harriet and five other children.

John Dew and Louisa married but a census entry for 1881 has not been found. He is also missing from the 1891 census and there is no trace until his death in Exeter St Thomas in Q4, 1909, aged 48. His principal occupation is also unknown.

In the 1891 census Louisa Dew is head of household, married, age 30 and working as a charwoman. She lived at 10 Alphington Street, Exeter, with Annie Louisa (b, Q4 1879, St Thomas), Frances Alice (b Q2 1882, St Thomas), William John** (1885-1915), Sarah E (b Cardiff, 1886) and **Alfred Thomas** (1891 – 31/5/1916).

- Annie Louisa Dew married Alfred Dorothy on 26 January, 1900, at Powderham when he was a Licensed victualler of the Grapes Inn, South Street, Exeter. They had a child Reginald

Alfred Dorothy, born 28 July 1904. Alfred Dorothy enlisted aged 38 in WW1. Annie Dorothy died 19 July 1935.

*- **William John Dew is separately recorded, dying at the Battle of Loos, 25 September 1915)*

Louisa Dew next married James Morris/Morrish in Exeter in Q4, 1897 and in 1901 they are shown as living at Redhill Cottage, Powderham with **Alfred Thomas Dew**, 11, step-son, Frederick Morris, son, 1, and Florence Morris, 5 months. James Morris was a wagoner.

Alfred Thomas Dew was 18 when he joined the Royal Navy on 24th August, 1910 for a 12 year engagement as a Stoker, 2nd class with a service no SS 110286. His previous occupation is shown as gardener.

He was transferred to C.S.Stoker 1st class on 10 June 1914 with service number K22746. He had joined H.M.S.INDEFATIGABLE in February 1911. There is only one known photograph, a newspaper item, which shows him seated at front. His naval record shows him to be 5'4" tall and with a tattoo "Heart & true love" on left forearm.

H.M.S. INDEFATIGABLE was a battlecruiser of the Royal Navy and the lead ship of her class. Her keel was laid down in 1909 and she was commissioned in 1911. She was an enlarged version of the earlier *Invincible* class with a revised protection scheme and additional length amidships to allow her two middle turrets to fire on either broadside.

When the First World War began, *Indefatigable* was serving with the 2nd Battlecruiser Squadron (BCS) in the Mediterranean, where she unsuccessfully pursued the battlecruiser *Goeben* and the light cruiser *Breslau* of the German Imperial Navy as they fled towards the Ottoman Empire. The ship bombarded Ottoman fortifications defending the Dardanelles on 3 November 1914, then, following a refit in Malta, returned to the United Kingdom in February where she rejoined the 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadron.

Indefatigable was sunk on 31 May 1916 during the Battle of Jutland, the largest naval battle of the war. Part of Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty's Battlecruiser Fleet, she was hit several times in the first minutes of the "Run to the South", the opening phase of the battlecruiser action. Shells from the German battlecruiser *Von der Tann* caused an explosion ripping a hole in her hull, and a second explosion hurled large pieces of the ship 200feet (60m) in the air. Only two of the crew of 1,019 survived. (ex- Wikipedia)



above, H.M.S. INDEFATIGABLE sinking
(from naval-history.net)

right, a cutting from the *Western Times* reporting the loss of local men from the INDEFATIGABLE. Alfred Dew is sitting on the right.



The *Western Times*, Friday 9 June, 1916, reported:

"In the recent naval battle the following Dawlish men were known to have been in the engagement: W.H.Heal, *F.J.Hill, *G.Voysey, *R.E.Brock, *Bond, H.M.S."Warrior"; F.Morrish, H.M.S."Defence", A.T.Dew, H.M.S. "Indefatigable". News has been received that the above marked with an asterisk are safe. Mr A.T.Dew, we understand, had a brother killed in the battle of Loos.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: DEW, Alfred Thomas Stoker 1st Class K/22746 31/5/1916 Age: 26 Royal Navy H.M.S. "Indefatigable." Panel Reference 15. [Plymouth Naval Memorial](#) Son of the late John and Louisa Dew, (his Naval Record and RN war Graves Roll shows date of birth 3 November 1891, see census data)

He is recorded on the Devon Roll of Honour but not the date and location of death

Dawlish War memorial inscription: DEW A. A.B. R.N.

Devon Heritage site info:

K22746 Stoker 1st Class Alfred Thomas Dew of the Royal Navy, *HMS Indefatigable* . Son of the late John and Louisa Dew of Queen's terrace, Dawlish. Born in Exeter in the March quarter of 1890. Died 31 May 1916 aged 26 at the Battle of Jutland. (birth date and age incorrect-ed)

Next of kin: Louise Morris(h), 12 Queen Lane, Dawlish - mother

Dawlish World War One Project

References: CWGC BMD and census records. William J Dew – cross refers. Naval-history.net
War Graves Roll and Naval service record RAWARD/BROWN/HEATH family tree
(ancestry.co.uk) JUTLAND 1916 by Steel & Hart

The Battle of Jutland (Skagerrakschlacht) was the largest naval battle of World War I, fought between 31st May and 1st June 1916, in the North Sea near Jutland, Denmark. The Germans' plan was to use five modern battlecruisers to lure the British through a submarine picket line and into the path of the main German fleet.

The plan didn't succeed, but the battle is considered to be won by the Germans, giving the Royal Navy a heavy blow.

The battlecruiser HMS INDEFATIGABLE (Captain Charles Sowerby) was locked in a gunnery duel with the German battlecruiser VON DER TANN when a German salvo was observed to strike HMS INDEFATIGABLE midships. HMS INDEFATIGABLE lurched out of line to starboard only to be stuck squarely by a second salvo. It appears that HMS INDEFATIGABLE received a shell in her X turret which ignited cordite charges, the resultant flash shooting down to the aft magazines. It is equally plausible that a shell may have penetrated the magazine directly. The ship was wreathed in smoke but when it cleared, HMS INDEFATIGABLE was sinking by the stern and listing over to port. She sank in seconds taking 1,017 of her crew with her.

DEW A T text 23/11/15 rbv